DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 481 825 CE 085 610

TITLE	History Untold: Celebrating Ohio History Through ABLE Students. Ohio History Project.
INSTITUTION	Kent State Univ., OH. Ohio Literacy Resource Center.
SPONS AGENCY	Ohio State Dept. of Education, Columbus. Div. of Career-Technical and Adult Education.
PUB DATE	2001-00-00
NOTE	57p.; For the 2002 volume of "History Untold ...", see CE 085 611.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://literacy.kent.edu/Oasis/Pubs/ohp01/index.html.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - General (020) -- Creative Works (030) -- Historical Materials (060)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Basic Education; Adult Learning; *Adult Literacy; Adult Programs; Adult Students; Community Development; Family History; Historic Sites; Interviews; *Literacy Education; Local History; Natural Disasters; *Oral History; Personal Narratives; *Personal Writing; Reminiscence; *State History; *Student Developed Materials; Weather
IDENTIFIERS	Historical Fiction; Historical Landmarks; National Register of Historic Places; *Ohio; Personal History; Twentieth Century History

ABSTRACT

This document is a compilation of 33 pieces of writing presenting Ohio adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) students' perspectives of community and personal history. The items included in the compilation were written by ABLE students across Ohio in celebration of Ohio History Day. The compilation is organized in five sections as follows: (1) personal history (eight personal narratives, including narratives describing work at the Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant, life in an oil patch, life in the mountains during the Depression, life on a farm in the 1950s, and life as the brother of a heart and kidney transplant recipient); (2) historical communities (nine descriptions of Ohio sites that are included in the National Register of Historic Places); (3) oral history (four narratives and an interview with a man who was imprisoned in the Soviet Union in 1968 after Russian fighter planes forced his plane down for allegedly violating Soviet air space); (4) historical weather (eight personal narratives, including a narrative about the 1978 blizzard, several about floods, and a narrative about a tornado); and (5) historical fiction (three history-based fictional narratives, including one about "rum runners" smuggling liquor from Canada during Prohibition and one about a P.T. boat prowling Lake Erie during World War II). (MN)

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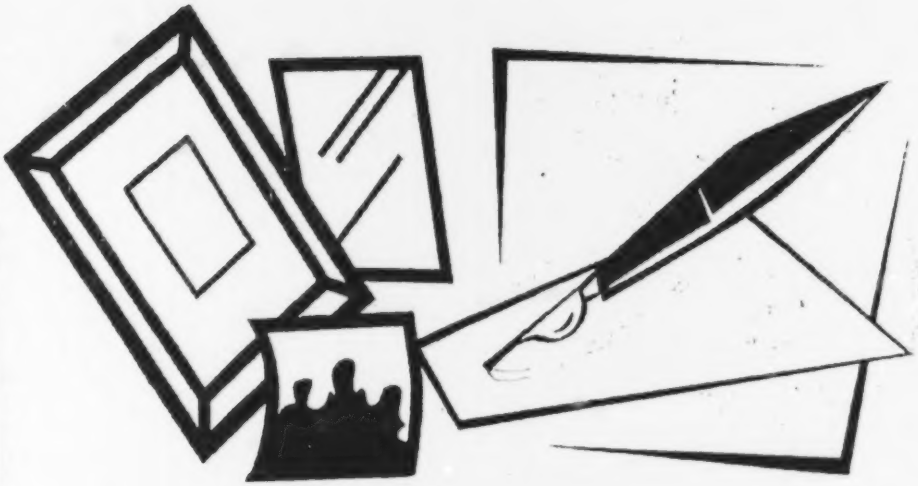

History Untold

Celebrating Ohio History through ABLE Students

"Everyone has a story to tell, if only someone would listen, If only someone would ask."
-William Zimmerman

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Foreword

The Ohio Literacy Resource Center presents to you the first edition of this very special publication. *History Untold* is a compilation of Ohio ABLE students' perspective of community and personal history. These students, along with the support of their teachers, have provided literary work to share and present in celebration of Ohio History Day. In their voices they have given you personal reflections of historical events they have witnessed. The OLRC commends these students for allowing us to go on these historical voyages with them. Additionally, Ohio ABLE students are to be celebrated and applauded for taking interest in documenting and preserving historical events.

As a special contribution to this publication, Phillip Edwards, also an ABLE student, has creatively spun some very intriguing and exciting renditions of historical fiction. Although there are some familiar places mentioned, the journey the author takes you on is all fictional. His work can be found in the Historical Fiction section of this publication.

Without the help of so many of our supporters, this publication would not be possible. We are grateful for the following individuals and organizations: Steve Paschen, President of Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums; Dr. Nancy Padak, Project Administrator of the OLRC; Dr. Mark Tabeau, historian; the Ohio Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Ohio Department of Education; the Ohio Bicentennial Commission; GTE/Verizon; The Wallpaper Project and AAA Ohio Motorists Association.

Ohio Literacy Resource Center

Enhancing Adult Literacy in Ohio

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Personal History	1
Historical Communities	13
Oral History	21
Historical Weather	37
Historical Fiction	49

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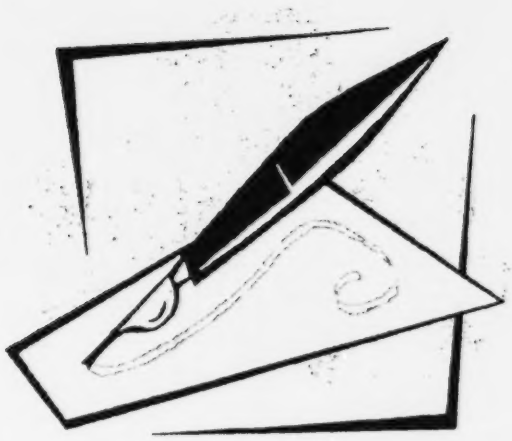

Personal History

A Precipitous Alteration
Windham, Ohio 1940-1955

The population and employment for Windham Village was in for a rapid change when the Federal Government purchased over 21 thousand acres of land a stone's throw from Windham. The name given to this purchase was the Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant. Laborers were needed and housing to accommodate the many families who came seeking employment. To fill some of this need the Maple Grove Park Apartments were built.

My husband had left employment in Mississippi paying 30 cents an hour to take a job at the Arsenal for 65 cents an hour. We moved into apartment 15F which rented for $32 a month. It was a 2-bedroom apartment heated with a coal furnace. The bathroom had a shower, a lavatory and toilet, but no bathtub. We heated the water with a heater connected to a large tank. The clothes line was in the front yard and the water so discolored my wash that I was hesitant to hang my laundry outside.

The family was happy and content. We later bought land outside of town and built a home. I still live here with my daughter and grandson.

The Arsenal is still here but obsolete. However, the National Guard has training facilities there and it could be made functional if the need should arise, as it was during the Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis and Vietnam.

The population of Windham is now about 3000. Many new homes have been built and a new elementary school. Life goes on but at a much slower pace.

-Jessie Chase

Maplewood Career Center

Jessie in front of 15F - May 2000

2

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In order to understand the magnitude of the effect the Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant had on one small town, some background of the Arsenal is needed:

The Arsenal consisted of 22,000 acres of farmland and forest when purchased by the government in 1940. It was in full operation in 10 months and employed over 18,000 workers.

The Portage County farmers were given thirty days to sell everything they couldn't take with them, and the auctions went on from dawn to dusk each day in August 1940. By September it was all over. The farmers formed a sorry parade on the country roads-250 families, 1300 people-the greatest permanent mass relocation program in Ohio history.....

Excerpts taken from *Ravenna*, an Ohio Magazine article by Sue Gorisek, 1986.

Within a year of the farmers' leaving, the first bombs rolled off the assembly line at the Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant. The countryside had given way to an incredible war machine: an instant top-secret city of 1,200 buildings, 18,000 workers and 500 earth-covered bunkers where live ammunition was stored.

In 1940 Windham Village had a population of 316 with no water system, no sewage system, no gas lines, no police department and definitely no extra housing. Then enter the government– building sewage and water systems and 2000 housing units. The population grew from 316 to 5000 in a year and was the fastest growing town in the United States.

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The Maple Grove Housing Project, as it was called, encompassed 117 acres of land. The housing buildings that were built were of six types: A,B,C,D,E, and F. The buildings consisted of the following types of apartments ranging from three to six rooms. The buildings were built between 1942 and 1943. They rested on wooden posts which set on concrete piers that were below ground. The floors were of varnished oak flooring. There was no insulation in the walls, and the units were heated with coal furnaces. The plumbing fixtures consisted of a kitchen sink and the bathroom had a shower, lavatory and a toilet– no tub. The pipes were galvanized iron. The rent for a three bedroom unit was $39.50 and for an additional $6.00 a month a person could have it furnished. Some of the housing units still exist, but many have been torn down. The ones in existence are rented as low cost housing. The unit that rented for $39.50 in 1943 now rents for $340 unfurnished.

The Project also included a community building which had a theatre with a seating capacity of approximately 400, a library, doctor and dentist offices and various other rooms. A small shopping center consisting of three stores and a gas station was built along with an elementary school. The shopping center no longer exists, but the school is still being used today.

Turning Point

The year 1944 was a turning point for the Chase family. Employment in Panola County, Sardis, Mississippi, was critical. Charles Chase's job for the Prisoner of War Camp, Como, Mississippi, was terminated.

The employment office in Sardis, Mississippi, had a list of employment available in Ravenna, Ohio– the Ravenna Arsenal, Inc. Charles and a couple of friends were sent by the employment office to work at the Ravenna Arsenal, Inc.

They lived in the dormitory on the arsenal site. Later the family moved to Windham, Ohio and rented an apartment known as the Windham Project. A three-bedroom apartment rent was $48.00 a month. The apartment was heated with a coal furnace. The bathroom consisted of a shower and no bath tub.

Tragedy came on a Saturday morning. The apartment caught fire. The two youngest children were asleep upstairs.

Charles broke the rear door to the apartment, cutting his hand, but the children were rescued with minor burns.

When the Windham Estate Homes were accepting applications to build individual homes, they visited the model home and Charles saw the upstairs had no exit door. He never forgot the apartment fire that could have ended in tragedy without that exit.

Later they purchased land out of the Village and built a home. Chase made sure the house plan had a back door.

Jessie Chase, Betty Clark, Anna Lowell
Maplewood Career Center

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My Life In the Oil Patch

I attended Portland Grade School from first grade through the eighth. I then went to Racine High School for one-and-one-half years, quitting when I was fifteen years old to go to work in the oil field. My father had always worked in the oil fields, and I had helped him. That is where I got some of my experience.

I also carried the mail across the Ohio River in a row boat. I rowed across and back three times a day for $35.00 per month, and I was making $35.00 per month in the oil field for a total of $70.00 per month. In 1940 that was good money for a sixteen year old boy.

I bought a motorcycle and my first car. The motorcycle was a 1931 Harley Davidson and I gave $150.00 for it. The car was a 1937 Ford. I bought it from my sister for $250.00. Later I bought a 1934 Harley Davidson for another $150.00; I had blown up the 1931 cycle.

After I was married at the age of eighteen, I went to Sistersville, West Virginia, to cook in the oil field. The war was going on, so I went to work at the Fifth Service Command Post in Newark, Ohio, repairing army vehicles. After the war, I went back to the oil field, working in Sistersville, and then to Alfred, Ohio.

In 1949 I moved to Somerset, Ohio, and went to work pumping wells for Mideast Oil Co. I have worked for a lot of different companies, most of which are not in operation anymore. I have worked in Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky, and New York. I have spent better than fifty years in the oil patch. I have roustabouted, pumped, worked on service rigs, dressed tools on a spudder, and have been a field representative and production manager. It has been a great life and I sure have enjoyed it.

-Earl Willford

Perry County ABLE

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Almost Heaven

In 1925, in a little coal mining village in West Virginia, there was a baby boom. Five baby boys were born to five different families: Homer Casey, Roosevelt Anderson, Rush Moorer, Richard Cunningham, and yours truly, Claude Victor Berry. We all grew up together. We were wild, young, and free. We didn't have anything that the world would call wealth, but we were happy with what we had.

As young boys often do, we tried to mimic the men around us. This was during the Depression and jobs were scarce. Most of the men around there worked in the coal mines two days a week. We all thought it would be fun to work in a mine too. When the men would leave for the mines we would head for the hills to dig our own mines. We would leave early in the morning and be gone all day. After a while our parents began to wonder what we were doing all day long. We had to come clean and tell them. By this time we had tunneled twenty or thirty feet into the side of the mountain.

In the innocence of youth we had no idea of the risks we had been taking. Our parents were quick to explain to us how dangerous what we had been doing was. We never thought about the possibility of a cave-in or of its potentially fatal consequences. We had only thought of the adventure and excitement of being together.

Grounded from the "world of mining" we began to look for new things to do. We loved to build. We built a log cabin to play in. We built a beaver dam to swim in and a big swing. The swing was actually a sixty foot cable attached to a huge oak tree. You had to grab hold of the end of the cable with both hands and hang on tight while a couple of the other guys gave you a big push. Fortunately none us ever fell. If we had, we would have fallen about one hundred feet down the mountainside.

We never worried about the many different kinds of snakes in the mountains around our homes. Neither did we worry about the swift rapids in the rivers nor the high rocky cliffs in the mountains. To us it was a paradise.

The mountains gave us life. There was one spot especially. It was about a quarter of a mile in size. It was like a Garden of Eden to us. It was beautiful, with apple trees in the midst of it, and a mountain stream brimming with nice mountain trout. There were all kinds of nuts and berries for us to eat as well. And , oh, yes, I cannot forget the bull frog pond at the foot of a huge beechnut tree whose branches always seemed to be reaching up to the heavens in praise to God.

You might be wondering what ever happened to all of us. Well, Homer became a track star in school, and then lost his life serving his country. Roosevelt also lost his life in the service. Rush was in the war, but he made it back. Richard never went into the service. I also was in the war and God smiled on me and I also made it back.

It has been many years since the five of us roamed the hills together. I will never forget the joy of growing up in the mountains of West Virginia. To me, it wasn't "almost heaven" — it was heaven.

-Claude Berry

Southwest Community Center

6

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Journey to the Edge of Survival

As a youngster growing up, I remember being very happy and looking forward to the many wonderful things life had to offer. It was my step-mother, Michi Bias, who gave me this outlook. She was truly a mother figure to me who gave me such strength and courage. She was a real inspiration to me and I wanted to be just like her.

One special thing she did for us (my brother, Dewayne, and I) was to take us on a camping trip every summer. It gave us something to look forward to every year.

In the summer of 1978, it was very hot and humid when we got out of school for summer break. There were about ten of us going camping that year - three adults and seven children. We were all very excited and more than a little anxious to get to the camp site. But little did I know that we were about to embark on a **journey that would take us to the edge of survival.**

Upon arriving at the camp site, I remember looking around and thinking about how beautiful and peaceful it was. There were tall green trees everywhere. The trails were a jogger's paradise and there were numerous campers of all sizes and shapes around us. The river's water was so peaceful, it was so pleasant to just gaze upon it. A feeling of excitement overtook us all. We immediately set up our sleeping tents, our miniature stove, and other miscellaneous items for the trip.

The next day, while the adults sat chatting, all the kids decided to explore the park. However, we were not aware of all the dangers that lay ahead of us. We came upon a beautiful waterfall. As we got nearer to the waterfall, we noticed a rocky path across the top of it. It looked like it would be fun to try to walk across the top of the waterfall.

The older kids crossed first then my younger brother and I followed. What happened next was just all too unreal. One minute my brother and I were walking on the rocks when suddenly I slipped on some green moss and almost immediately found myself flying over the waterfall. The only thought I had going through my mind was "I can't die by myself". That was when I grabbed my brother and took him flying over the waterfall with me. What a frightening moment !! I began to scream for help.

At the bottom of the waterfall was a raging river that seemed very angry. I knew that if something didn't happen before hitting the bottom of the waterfall, we would never survive the river below. About a quarter of the way down the waterfall my foot somehow slipped into a crevice in the rock behind the waterfall. I held onto my brother tightly and we both screamed at the top of our lungs for help. The roar of the water was so loud that it took all our strength to yell loud enough for the others to hear us. But they did. The older kids came running back to where we had fallen. First they grabbed my brother and pulled him to safety. Then they were able to reach me and pull me up to my brother's side.

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Once back on solid ground I remember feeling very frightened, but relieved that we were safe. As I looked back over the waterfall all I could see were the boisterous waves below me. I knew that if they had not been able to pull us to safety we would have drowned that day. I also knew there had to have been a Higher Power looking after us that day. What could have been a tragedy turned into a triumph.

Since that day, I have learned that on the journey of life there are many snares, disappointments, and dangers lying in wait for us. However, with courage, strength, and other's help we can conquer anything in life – that through every tragedy there is also victory awaiting us on solid ground.

However, since that day, I have made it a point to not try to cross any more waterfalls!

-Treva Jackson
Southwest Community Center

A Farmer's Life

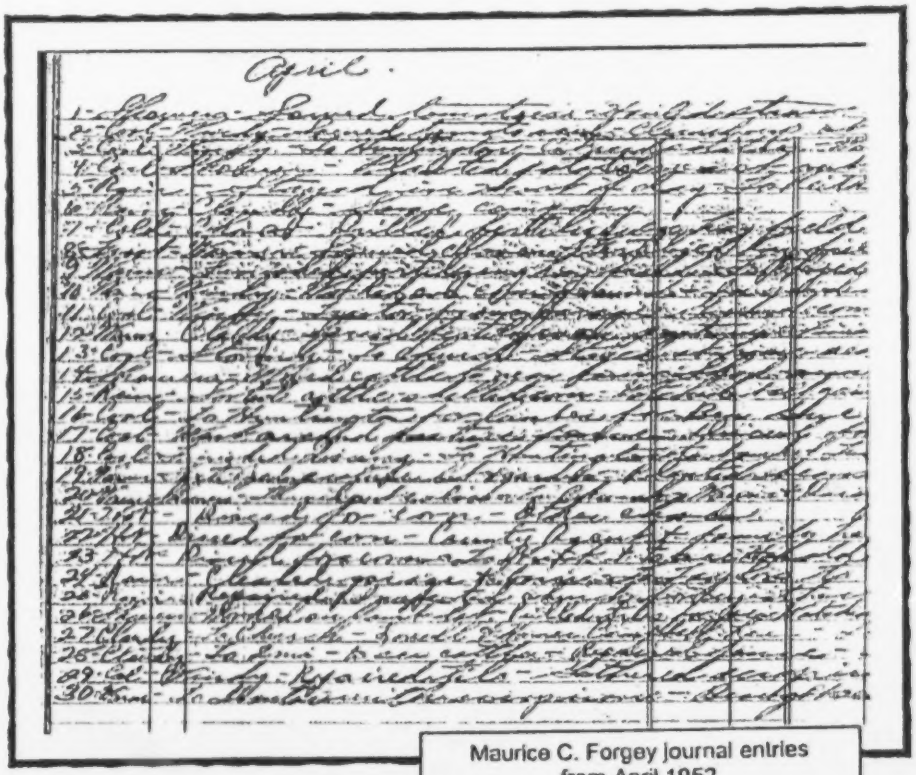
My father-in-law was a truck farmer. This means he raised tomatoes, cabbage, peppers, turnips, kale, and tobacco to sell at the market in Huntington, West Virginia. He not only was a truck farmer, but he raised beef cattle. Hay and corn were raised on the farm for the livestock. Horses and dogs were also part of this farm. Maurice C. Forgey did custom baling for other farmers from Gallipolis, Ohio, to South Point, Ohio, since there were few balers in 1952.

Even though Maurice was a busy farmer, he always took time out of his busy day to write in his daily journal.

We found his journals in an old box in a closet after his death. These journals became a treasure to his son, my husband Maurice E. Forgey.

In his journal he always mentioned the weather for each day and gave a short summary of the day.

This April in 1952 showed Maurice C. Forgey a busy man as we can tell from his own handwriting.



Maurice C. Forgey journal entries from April 1952

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History In My Family

My historical event lives within my family. I guess it happened about 7 years ago with my oldest brother. His name is James Harris. He served in the U.S. Army for 23 years. Germany, Korea, Vietnam and Fort Knox, Kentucky, were just a few places that he was stationed.

After leaving the army and settling in Columbus where Mom, Dad and my 2 sisters and baby brother all lived, he became very ill. His heart and kidneys started to shut down. This made him unable to really enjoy life after serving time for himself and his country. I guess he wondered at times out of anger and emotional strain, "Is this my reward for all the good things that I've done? Why does this have to happen to me? Why not the bad and useless people in the world that's no good use to themselves or the world?"

I would imagine that my brother and his wife really got tired of all the pain and emotional strain. After being put on the donor list, hopes and plans continued to give us something to believe in. Then it happened. A call came to notify them that a heart and kidney that matched were waiting. Some loving, caring person was giving him a chance at a functional life again.

My brother had his heart and kidney transplanted and it was successful. He was the second person that Ohio State University Hospital had ever done a double transplant of the heart and kidney. My sister-in-law told me that he was the first Afro-American in the United States that had the operation.

He is not in the greatest physical condition as he would like to be, but he's sure better than he used to be. He's living life again. I think it's pretty good for a 58 year old guy. High tech knowledge and medical science is what really makes it possible for some of these miracles to happen. What is it all about? Living to learn and learning to live.

-Walter Robinson

North Education Center - ABLE

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Tom Dodge/ Dispatch

Stephanie Harris with her husband, James, who received a new heart and kidney

Patient's wife would give almost anything

Heart-kidney operation OSU's second

By Alice Thomas
Dispatch Staff Reporter

When her husband was sick, Stephanie Harris offered to give him a kidney.

When his condition worsened, doctors told James Harris that he also would need a new heart.

"I looked at him and said, 'I can't give you *that*, too,'" Mrs. Harris said, reflecting on the East Side couple's three-year wait for an organ donor.

What Mrs. Harris could not provide, doctors at Ohio State University Medical Center did March 20, when Mr. Harris, 51, became the hospital's second patient to receive a heart-kidney transplant.

Doctors say the operation was a success. Mr. Harris was in fair condition yesterday at the hospital.

"We've taken a fellow that was bed-bound and on dialysis to a functioning guy with a beating, healthy heart just like the rest of us," said Dr. David A. Brown, assistant professor of thoracic and cardiovascular surgery at OSU, who performed the heart transplant.

The double operation is rare, with "only a handful" performed annually in the United States, Brown estimated.

The first heart-kidney transplant at OSU Medical Center — performed last year on Roger Wilson of Butler, Ohio — also was a success, Brown said. Wilson is doing well, Brown said.

Mr. Harris' odyssey began seven years ago when he suffered kidney failure.

Doctors determined that his wife's kidney could be transplanted into his body, but Mr. Harris then was stricken with cardiomyopathy, or a weakened heart muscle.

He was put on a list for a heart and kidney transplant, where his name remained for three years.

In February, Mr. Harris was hospitalized when his condition worsened. While still there last week, he received word that a 28-year-old Columbus man who died had compatible organs.

"His heart was working very poorly," Brown said of Mr. Harris' before the surgery.

The heart was transplanted first, he said, because it cannot be sustained outside the body as long as a kidney.

After an eight-hour wait to check on the heart's functions, doctors transplanted the kidney.

The organs in a heart-kidney transplant come from one donor, Brown said, to reduce the chance of rejection.

"It's almost like transplanting one organ," he said.

Heading the kidney transplant was Dr. Ginny L. Baumgardner, assistant professor of surgery with OSU's transplantation division.

"It really went well," Baumgardner said. "We had no problems."

Mr. Harris credits the staff, medical technology and his family — who "stuck right by me" — with giving him the strength to endure the procedure.

Mr. Harris is an Army veteran who served in Korea and Vietnam. He and his wife have nine biological and foster children.

He looks forward to the future, he said.

"I'm so glad to have a new life through the love of someone else. It's been a remarkable experience."

Columbus Dispatch article

11

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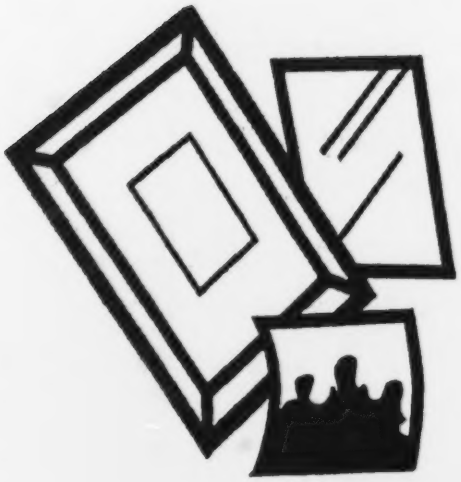

Historical Communities

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources which are worthy of preservation. It is authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. It is part of a national program which coordinates and supports public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect historic and archaeological resources. Listings are evaluated by uniform standards and include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The NRHP is administered by the National Park Service and includes more than 70,000 listings. This information is from http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/about.htm.

-Compiled By
Ohio Avenue ABE
Gallia-Jackson-Vinton JVSD

Gallipolis Public Square and Garden Lots Historic District

Court and State Streets
1st and 2nd Ave.
Gallipolis, Ohio
Gallia County

There are many architecturally and/or historically significant buildings and sites within this district which includes parts of Court and State Streets and First and Second Avenues. The city park is the site of the first settlement and has several memorials of interest including the Bandstand, which is of Eastlake influence. It was built in 1876 as a memorial to Gallia County Civil War veterans. It is a landmark of the city of Gallipolis and is still used for activities and performances.

There are 33 sites, buildings, and homes within this area, which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The architectural styles include Early Republic, Mid 19th Century Revival, and Late Victorian.

This information is from "A Self-Guided Tour Map of the Historic City of Gallipolis, Ohio".

The Gallipolis Public Square and Garden Lots Historic District was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on January 8, 1980.

14

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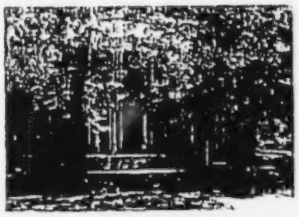
Gatewood

76 State St.
Gallipolis, Ohio
Gallia County



Built in 1847, Gatewood is a brick Colonial structure that was the dream home of O.O. McIntyre, widely syndicated columnist of the 1930's. It was purchased as a 25th wedding anniversary gift for his wife, Maybelle Hope Small McIntyre.

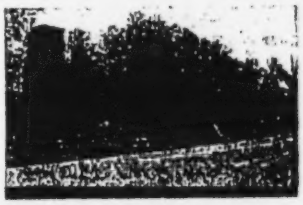
Gatewood was named in honor of Mrs. McIntyre's mother. McIntyre did not retire to Gatewood, but was laid in state there prior to burial on Mound Hill.

This information was taken from the brochure, "A Self-Guided Tour Map of the Historic City of Gallipolis, Ohio".

Gatewood was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on October 16, 1986.

The Ohio Hospital for Epileptics Stone Water Towers

Mill Creek Rd.
Gallipolis, Ohio
Gallia County



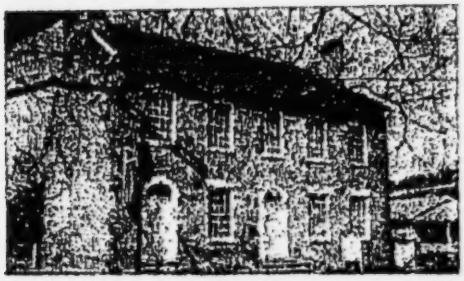
These stone water towers were erected by local craftsmen in 1892 and serviced the Ohio Hospital for Epileptics until 1950. The sandstone of the masonry walls was quarried from the surrounding hills. The hospital facility, a former Union Hospital site during the Civil War, was the first of its kind in the United States. The towers were restored in 1981-1982.

This information was taken from an Ohio Historical Marker, which is located on the site.

The Stone Water Towers were entered in the National Register of Historic Places on September 13, 1978.

Our House

434 1st Ave.
Gallipolis, Ohio
Gallia County



Gallipolis, where Our House stands, had its beginning in a land speculation scheme. Congress granted 3.5 million acres of land, east of the Scioto River in Southern Ohio, to the Scioto Company founded by William Duer and his associates. The company sent a salesman to Europe to sell the land. In 1789 the Scioto salesman, joined by an Englishman, formed the Compagnie du Scioto in Paris. They bought the former company's holdings to resell them to Frenchmen, who were desperate to escape from the ill fate of the French Revolution. About five hundred men, women, and children, from various walks of life left their homeland to settle in North America. Although the Scioto Company failed to provide them with land it promised, the Ohio Company of Associates accommodated them in the vicinity.

In 1790 Major John Burnham from Marietta was sent to construct some houses and cabins for the new settlers on the future site of Gallipolis. After arriving in the area, the immigrants faced the harsh reality of living in the new country. They were not ready to be self-sufficient; some yearned for the comfortable life they left behind. Half of them moved elsewhere within two years. Twenty French families remained and were joined by settlers from Massachusetts and Virginia. They built a strong, prosperous community.

Around 1819, Henry Cushing, from a prominent family in Gallipolis, built the three-story tavern in the Federal style. It was said that ten guests could comfortably lodge within. In 1825, General Lafayette, on his triumphant tour of America, was entertained in this tavern, which also became the center of the community.

In 1913-1936, after Dr. and Mrs. Charles E. Holzer of Gallipolis purchased and restored the property, people desired this site to be a museum.

In 1944, the Holzers gave this house to the state as a gift.

In 1966, the Ohio Historical Society restored and re-furnished "Our House" completely. It is open to the public from June through August.

This information was taken from the brochure of the Ohio Historical Society.

Our House was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on November 10, 1970.

Written by Chieko Moore

16

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Davis Mill

Also known as:
Davies Mill, Cora Mill, and Falls of Raccoon Mill
NE of Patriot on Cora Mill Road
Patriot, Ohio
Gallia County

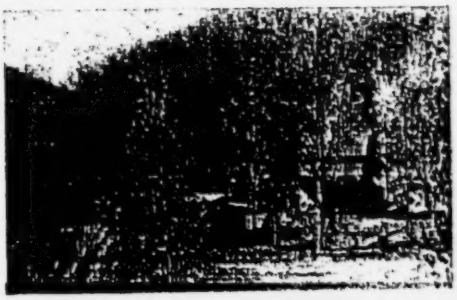
The mill is located ten miles from the mouth of the Raccoon Creek on Cora Mill Road in Cora, Ohio. It was built in 1853. Farmers came from miles around to have their grain ground at this location. In 1890 the mill was modernized with a new turbine.

This information was taken from Gallipolis, Ohio – A Pictorial History 1790-1990.

Davis Mill was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on November 28, 1980.

Evans House

Also known as: Erb House
Coal Valley Road
Vinton, Ohio
Gallia County



A Welsh immigrant, Evan Evans, is the earliest verified owner of the property. He lived there in 1854 but the house may have been built earlier.

The Evans house derives its primary significance as an example of a traditional folk house form that was once common to the southern Ohio Appalachian region. While log houses and cabins were constructed in many forms, this one seems most closely related to the rectangular mountain cabin of southeastern Appalachia and finds its roots in forms used by the Scots-Irish and the New World Germans.

The Evans house is a two-story, half-dovetailed notch log structure with a rear ell of wooden construction. The exterior chimney is located at one end. The chimney was constructed on a cut sandstone base with tapered shoulders narrowing to a chimneystack made of handmade brick. The exterior has its own story to tell of the early life of the house. The fireplace has a wide surround along the hearth opening. The floor joists supporting the second floor are quite large and were smoothed by a hand plane.

Sandra Erb, who is a former resident of the home furnished this information.

The Evans House was entered in the National Register of Historic Places in July of 1984.

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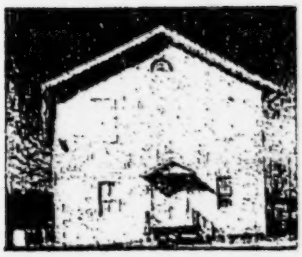
Ewington Academy

Ewington Road
Ewington, Ohio
Gallia County



The Ewington Citizens' Literacy Institute purchased this site and sponsored the construction of Ewington Academy, which opened in 1859. The building, designed by George Ewing, was financed by popular subscription with much labor and materials donated. It provided high school level education to approximately 60 students each year. It ceased operation as an academy in 1901 and then served as an elementary school until about 1947.

This information was taken from an Ohio Historical Marker located on the site.

Ewington Academy was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on September 30, 1982.

Gallipolis Locks and Dam

292.2 mile marker
10 miles below Gallipolis
Gallia County

The Gallipolis Locks and Dam were dedicated in 1937 as a $10,000,000 federal project. It was the largest roller dam in the country and did away with the three smaller dams near Gallipolis in the Ohio and Kanawha rivers. It consists of eight concrete piers which support gigantic steel rollers 30 feet in diameter and 125 feet long. The rollers are raised up to 100 feet during flood season to equalize the water above and below the dam.

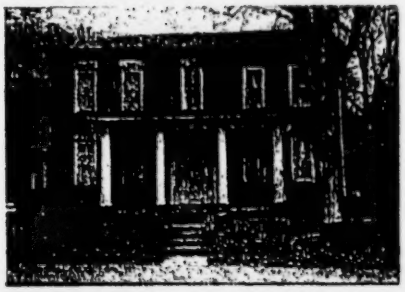
In recent times the locks were regarded by waterway shippers as a major bottleneck on the Ohio River because of their small size and deteriorating condition. New locks were built and their dedication took place in 1992.

This information is from paper clippings in the "Columbus Citizen Journal" and Gallipolis Ohio – A Pictorial History 1790-1990.

The Gallipolis Locks and Dam were entered in the National Register of Historic Places on February 21, 1994.

Old Wood Homestead

Also known as:
Wood's Tavern, Old Homestead
and The Homestead
1253 Jackson Pike
Rio Grande, Ohio
Gallia County

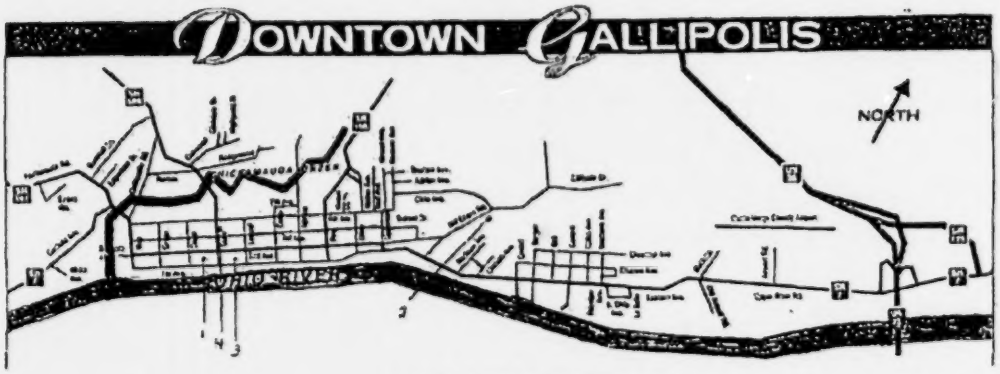


Nehemiah Wood built the Homestead in 1820. The brick was made on the farm. The Homestead once served as a stagecoach stop. Bob Evans purchased it in 1953. The Evans family lived in the home for 17 years. The building is now used for various purposes and is only open to the public during select farm events.

Bob Evans is best known for his Bob Evans Farms Sausage and his chain of Bob Evans Restaurants.

This information was taken from the sign in front of the home, which is located on the Bob Evans farm.

The Old Wood Homestead was entered in the National Register on December 12, 1987.



1. Gallipolis Public Square and Garden Lots
2. Stone Water Tower
3. Our House
4. Gatewood

This map is from the Ohio Valley Visitors Center.

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Oral History

Pistol Pete

On July 2, 1968, the peaceful little town of Gallipolis, Ohio, located on the beautiful Ohio River, breathed a sigh of relief. The events of the prior week had caused the small community to become alarmed.

This alarming event happened on the other side of the world. A seaboard World Airlines DC8 jet with 231 American servicemen aboard was believed to have strayed into Russian air space and was taken hostage by the Russian government. What did that have to do with Gallipolis, Ohio? A young Gallipolis native was among the servicemen on board the DC8 jet. He was known to the little community as "Pistol Pete." To the Army he was known as Christopher Anderson.

Pete had just turned 21 two weeks before this incident occurred. He had gotten the nickname of "Pistol Pete" at Gallia Academy High School where he won various awards in all three sports in which he participated.

He excelled in football, baseball, and basketball. He played varsity football for three years and lettered in it. He was voted most valuable player in his senior year. He lettered in basketball three years and baseball for four years. He was voted most valuable player in baseball in his junior year. He made the SEOAL (Southeastern Ohio Athletic League) two years and was voted most valuable player of that team. With all this athletic ability, he was known very well throughout the community.

The news spread quickly when Pete's parents received a telegram from the Department of Defense, Washington, D.C., stating that their son, Sp-4 Christopher E. Anderson, was aboard the aircraft forced to land at a Soviet air base.

Our history project was taken from an interview with Pete Anderson about this incident.

-GME ABLE Center
Gallia-Jackson-Vinton JVSD

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An Interview with Pete Anderson

KANDY: Hello, my name is Kandy Nuce and what is your name?

MR. ANDERSON: My name is Christopher Pete Anderson.

KANDY: Where did you live growing up?

MR. ANDERSON: In Gallipolis on Third Rd. and Fourth Ave. between the 700 and the 800 block, we moved around in that area a couple of times during my youth.

KANDY: Who are your parents?

MR. ANDERSON: My parents are Christopher and Helen Anderson.

KANDY: What values did your parents try to instill in you while you were growing up?

MR. ANDERSON: Well, they always told me to do the best I could do in whatever I attempted to do in life. They always told me to never be a quitter. Their motto was "winners never quit and quitters never win."

KANDY: That's good! What schools did you attend?

MR. ANDERSON: I attended Gallia Academy High School up to the 12th grade. After that I took some courses out at Rio Grande Community College, about 100 hours all together.

KANDY: Did you play sports?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, I played three sports. I played football. I lettered in varsity football. I played varsity football for three years and was voted most valuable my senior year. Also I made all SEOAL, which is all Southeastern Ohio Athletic League. I lettered in basketball three years. I was all SEOAL two years. I was also voted most valuable player of the team. I lettered four years in baseball. I was voted most valuable player my junior year.

KANDY: You really have some great accomplishments in sports. I understand that you had a nickname in sports too. Could you tell us about that?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, I was the quarterback and at that time, we were starting a new era as far as going more to passing. I had a couple of good games, where I had a lot of completions and yards. The name "Pistol Pete" was put on me at that time. On the basketball team I was a point guard and a leading scorer on the team. The name carried over from football to basketball.

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KANDY: Are there any sports incidents you would like to share?

MR. ANDERSON: All of my sports activities in high school were special to me. They all hold about the same value to me. I really enjoyed the time I was in high school.

KANDY: When you got out of school, you decided to join the service. Was that on a voluntary basis or were you drafted?

MR. ANDERSON: I volunteered to serve for three years.

KANDY: In what branch of the service did you serve?

MR. ANDERSON: It was the Army.

KANDY: Were you married or single at the time?

MR. ANDERSON: At the time I was single, but shortly after joining the service I did marry.

KANDY: How long were you in the service before this incident happened?

MR. ANDERSON: It was about a year and a half.

KANDY: What year did it take place?

MR. ANDERSON: It was July of 1968.

KANDY: How many men were on the plane?

MR. ANDERSON: I believe it was 231 servicemen, 2 civilians and 6 crewmembers.

KANDY: What was your destination?

MR. ANDERSON: We flew out of Washington state. I believe it was Fort McQuarter and our destination was to be Vietnam.

KANDY: What time of day did this take place?

MR. ANDERSON: The exact time I really could not tell you for sure. We had been in the air 12 or 14 hours approximately somewhere in that range. We went through two or three different time changes. I do know it was during the daylight hours, but an exact time I don't know.

KANDY: What happened right before the abduction?

MR. ANDERSON: We were flying normally, like we had been. It was our last 12 or 14 hours. I was asleep at the time but they tell me that a Russian fighter plane (MIG) flew up to us. There were four of them. They were on each side of us. I guess one of the ones up near the front fired their weapons. It was a machine gun or something of that nature to get the pilot's attention. At that time we did not know what was going on. My first thought was that we must be getting close to Vietnam because we had a plane escort in, but at a second look I noticed there was a Russian symbol. They were Russian MIGs. So at that time I did not know what was going on until the captain came over the loud speaker and told us, we were asked to land at one of their airstrips. At that time he had no further information. He was going to try to go ahead and land the plane. This was a new plane and one of the bigger passenger planes we had in the U.S. He was concerned whether he would have enough space to land or not.

KANDY: Was there any inclination that the airspace was dangerous or restricted?

MR. ANDERSON: No, we had no idea that we were flying into their airspace. Like I said, this was one of our newer planes, and that was its first flight. I don't know whether the instrument panel was malfunctioning or whether they just wanted to bring us down to take a look at it. After we landed we found out we were in their airspace and we were going to be detained until things got worked out.

KANDY: Did the Russians try to warn you not to enter their airspace?

MR. ANDERSON: To my knowledge there was no communication to that effect, no.

KANDY: How did they proceed to escort the plane down?

MR. ANDERSON: The MIGs (Fighter planes) led us to their base.

KANDY: What were your feelings at the time?

MR. ANDERSON: Well, like I said when I first saw the planes, I thought they were ours. After the captain informed us that we would be landing at one of their airstrips and what kind of problems we might have, I did not know what to think.

KANDY: What was the reaction of the other men on the plane?

MR. ANDERSON: Their reaction was basically the same as mine. We talked around and asked what was going on and none of us knew. We knew we were being forced down and at that time we did not know why. We just knew we had to get down, because those MIGs could fly all around us. We flew into a cloud and they were right there. When we came out of the cloud, they were right there. They could come right back. We would have been no contest in a confrontation. The captain did as he was instructed.

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KANDY: What happened after the plane landed?

MR. ANDERSON: When the plane landed, there were four soldiers that came aboard the plane. Two of them were more or less a search party while the other two had rifles. They searched the individuals to see if they had any weapons or contraband or whatever. After they searched us, they had us all get out of our seats and we all left the plane. As we exited the plane they took our dog tags (identification tags). Then there was an extensive search of the plane, which lasted approximately 2 hours. At that time we were held outside the plane in a confined area. After the search we were allowed to return to the plane. As we reentered the plane they did return our dog tags

KANDY: How many days did the Russians hold you captive?

MR. ANDERSON: They held us captive for four days. I think this took place on a Saturday afternoon (by our time) and we were released on a Tuesday. During this time we stayed on the plane.

KANDY: What happened the first day after they let you back on the plane?

MR. ANDERSON: The first day we were put back on the plane. At the time there were the serving trays, the trays they use to serve breakfast, lunch and dinner meals. I believe there were enough for two meals. So, at that time they gave us one of the meals. The next meal was on the second day. The first and second days were basically the same. We were told to stay on the plane. From time to time they would come in and get a group that wanted to get out and stretch their legs. That would be done outside of the plane. Also I was told that some soldiers did come on the plane one night. These soldiers asked some people if they wanted to go out and eat. By that time our food was pretty well down to nothing. People were scrounging around trying to eat anything. So, they took them out and took them to a cafeteria, or mess hall, or whatever they called it. There a meal was being prepared. They all talked Russian and none of us spoke Russian. So, they signaled or gestured, "what are we eating?" One of the cooks signaled or gestured by putting her hand about four feet off the ground and going "roof, roof".

KANDY: Oh my, a dog

(PAUSE)

KANDY: What was the U.S. government doing to get you released?

MR. ANDERSON: We were informed that our Defense Department would make contact with their Defense department and find out what we were being held for. They were trying to find out what happened and what it would take to negotiate our release.

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KANDY: Did the Russians do any bodily harm to anyone?

MR. ANDERSON: No, no one was threatened or injured in any way.

KANDY: Was your family informed about your captivity?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, the Pentagon sent a telegram to my family notifying them that I was on the plane that had been forced down. They were in the process of trying to get a release for the plane and the crewmembers, and they would get back with them when they had further information.

KANDY: Do you know what day your family received the telegram?

MR. ANDERSON: I believe it was the day after the plane was forced down that they got the telegram.

KANDY: Was the community of Gallipolis aware that the Russians were holding one of its members?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, there was an article in our local newspaper. That gave a short summary of who I was. It did go into detail that I was on a plane that the Russians had forced down. Yes, they were notified. The local newspaper and word of mouth notified them.

KANDY: Did the Russians verbally threaten anybody?

MR. ANDERSON: No, no, they never did threaten anybody that I'm aware of. No, the answer is definitely no.

KANDY: On about day three or four what was the morale of the men?

MR. ANDERSON: Well, our morale was fairly high. We were hoping for an early release, but we weren't sure. We kept our spirits up and we all hoped it would not be another Pueblo incident.

KANDY: Did you at any time feel you or some of the men would be killed?

MR. ANDERSON: No, that was never a thought in my mind and no one ever related that they felt that way to me.

KANDY: How did you finally get released?

MR. ANDERSON: Well, after the negotiations, the U.S. government had to sign a statement saying that our plane had violated Soviet airspace. On that signing our plane was released.

KANDY: Had the Russians done anything to your plane?

MR. ANDERSON: Well, as I stated earlier, this was the first flight for this plane and it was one of our newer models. We did notice people outside of the plane taking pictures and also taking video of the plane. As far as doing any kind of damage or anything like that they didn't. They did give us some jet fuel, because we were running low on fuel and we had to have extra fuel to take off and get on our way. So, they did give us the fuel that we needed.

KANDY: What were your feelings when the engine started and the plane began to taxi down the runway?

MR. ANDERSON: I was elated to be leaving that area. I was praying that the plane would have a safe trip after that.

KANDY: Where did you go, back to the U.S. or to Vietnam?

MR. ANDERSON: We went to a Japanese island. We were permitted to land on the island. Upon landing we were safe.

KANDY: Was this plane seizure broadcast on national television?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, it was. There were several news organizations there. I was asked if I wanted to be interviewed by CBS. They came on and asked me several questions, like how I was treated, and what did I eat? (I told him that we were running out of food and on the third day, they did come on the plane and give us bread and water.)

KANDY: Was there a debriefing in Japan when your plane was taken there?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, as soon as we landed in Japan, they gathered us all up, took us in a room and basically told us what we could and could not say. They told us not to give our feelings, to just basically tell what the facts were and not to do any interpretation.

KANDY: Did you call home?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, when I landed I called home. I called my wife and my mother. I made these calls from the Japanese base.

KANDY: Did your wife live in Gallipolis too?

MR. ANDERSON: No, at that time my wife was living in Renville with her mother. I believe that's in Perry County. She was living with her mother at the time.

KANDY: How soon did you come home?

MR. ANDERSON: From that point we went right to Vietnam and landed in Cam Ranh Bay. In my mind I imagined that there would be bombs shooting, people shooting at the plane as we came in, but actually, when I got there I was surprised at how peaceful it was there. There were men walking around with baseball caps on as opposed to steel helmets. They weren't wearing any life jackets or bulletproof vests. It was a casual atmosphere there. I said to myself, "Hum, I wouldn't mind staying here." After that I got processed, it took 3 maybe 4 hours. Here they divided the men up, and gave them their orders, as to where they were going. At that time I did not know where I was going; my orders were for the first infantry division. After that I got put on a plane. It was a smaller plane. I started flying up (to my destination), I looked down and said, "Oh no. I'll never make it back." I was saying that, but hoping I would (make it back). We landed at another airstrip. Here security was heightened. There were bunkers all around. You would see people wearing steel helmets instead of baseball caps. People had on flight jackets and they were carrying weapons, but it really wasn't that bad there, you know. We were processed. Then they put us in a convoy. We were going back through the jungle. I just thought that's it. I did not know if I'd ever make it back. The Lord took care of me. He got me through my 13-month stay there. I returned home 13 months later.

KANDY: Did you see combat?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, we had some combat. I was a military policeman. Some of my duties were to guard the general and his headquarters. We ran convoys carrying materials and some supplies from one base to another. We also went out in the jungle on search and seizure. We were looking for ammunition or weapons they had stored out there, or if we would see them hauling food or anything of that nature for the Vietcong. There were several times that we were fired upon. Several times when I was in the base camp at night we were under attack, but I made it back.

KANDY: We're glad you did. Did you receive any medals?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, when I was in the service, I received the National Events Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, 2 Army Accommodation Medals, the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry Medal with Palm, and the Good Conduct Medal.

KANDY: You've got a lot of medals there. What happened when you got back to Gallipolis?

MR. ANDERSON: When I got back to Gallipolis, as far as having a community party or anything, there was nothing like that. My family held a gathering of family and friends and that was basically it. As far as I know there was nothing in the paper. It was just a nice homecoming.

KANDY: But you were glad to be back?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, oh yes.

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KANDY: Tell me about your life today.

MR. ANDERSON: Well, I am married. I have a son and a daughter. My daughter is married to Bill Smith. They live over in Point Pleasant. She has four children and she is a homemaker. My son is a state highway patrolman in the northern part of the state around Toledo. He has two children. So, I am the grandfather of six. My wife Sharon works at the Bossard Library in Gallipolis. We have been married for 32 years and have six grandkids. That's basically my life.

KANDY: Do you still keep in touch with any of the guys on the plane?

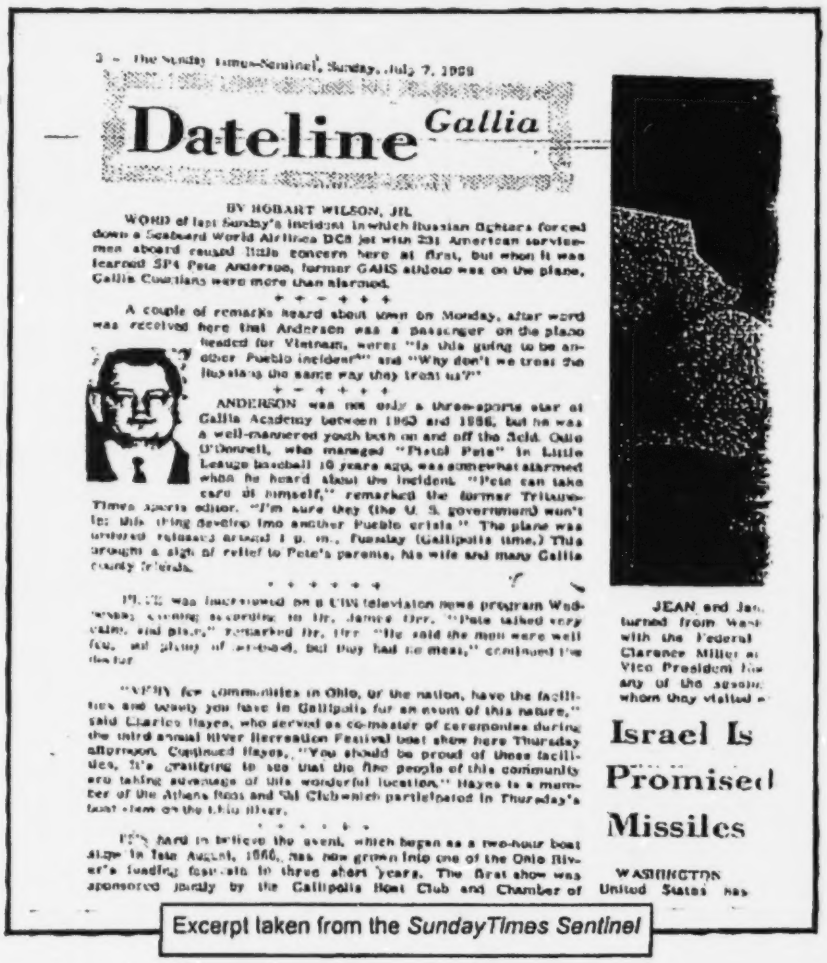
MR. ANDERSON: On that plane like any other plane trip you really are confined to your seat 90% of the time. I got to know the guys that were on both sides (of me). We talked about trying to stay in contact, but at the time, we were on that plane, we did not know exactly where we were going. So, it was hard to say this is where to write me. We exchanged our home addresses, but we would not be back there for another year. I really don't know if they made it back or not. Like I said, I may have lost the papers, but no, I never kept in contact with anyone.

KANDY: Are there any details I've left out, that you would like to share?

MR. ANDERSON: No, you were pretty thorough and I don't have anything to add to it.

KANDY: Well. I really appreciate you doing this for us and we thank you very much.

MR. ANDERSON: The pleasure is all mine.



3 — The Sunday Times-Sentinel, Sunday, Jul. 7, 1968

Dateline *Gallia*

BY HOBART WILSON, JR.

WORD of last Sunday's incident in which Russian fighters forced down a Seaboard World Airlines DC8 jet with 231 American servicemen aboard caused little concern here at first, but when it was learned SP4 Pete Anderson, former GAHS athlete was on the plane, Gallia Countians were more than alarmed.

+ + + + +

A couple of remarks heard about town on Monday, after word was received here that Anderson was a passenger on the plane headed for Vietnam, were: "Is this going to be another Pueblo incident?" and "Why don't we treat the Russians the same way they treat us?"

+ + + + +

ANDERSON was not only a three-sports star at Gallia Academy between 1963 and 1966, but he was a well-mannered youth both on and off the field. Ollie O'Donnell, who managed "Pistol Pete" in Little League baseball 10 years ago, was somewhat alarmed when he heard about the incident. "Pete can take care of himself," remarked the former Tribune-Times sports editor. "I'm sure they (the U. S. government) won't let this thing develop into another Pueblo crisis." The plane was ordered released around 1 p. m., Tuesday (Gallipolis time.) This brought a sigh of relief to Pete's parents, his wife and many Gallia county friends.

+ + + + + +

[illegible] was interviewed on a CBS television news program Wednesday evening according to Dr. James Orr. "Pete talked very calm, and plain," remarked Dr. Orr. "He said the men were well fed, and plenty of exercise, but they had no meat," continued the doctor.

"[illegible] for communities in Ohio, or the nation, have the facilities and beauty you have in Gallipolis for an event of this nature," said Charles Hayes, who served as co-master of ceremonies during the third annual River Recreation Festival boat show here Thursday afternoon. Continued Hayes, "You should be proud of these facilities. It's gratifying to see that the fine people of this community are taking advantage of this wonderful location." Hayes is a member of the Athens Boat and Ski Club which participated in Thursday's boat show on the Ohio River.

+ + + + +

It's hard to believe the event, which began as a two-hour boat show in late August, 1966, has now grown into one of the Ohio River's leading festivals in three short years. The first show was sponsored jointly by the Gallipolis Boat Club and Chamber of

JEAN and Jac[illegible] returned from Wash[illegible] with the Federal Clarence Miller at Vice President Hu[illegible] any of the sessio[illegible] whom they visited a[illegible]

Israel Is Promised Missiles

WASHINGTON — United States has

Excerpt taken from the *SundayTimes Sentinel*

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Pete Anderson, Ex-GAHS Athlete.

On Jet Forced Down By Russians

At least one Gallia County serviceman was aboard the American jet airliner forced down by Russian fighter planes late Sunday night. The airliner, carrying 231 servicemen, was intercepted and forced to land in the Kurile Islands north of Japan.

Mrs. Chris Anderson, of 857 Third Ave., Gallipolis, received a telegram from the Department of Defense, Washington, D. C., around 1 p.m., Monday stating that her son, Sp-4 Christopher E. Anderson, was aboard the aircraft.

The telegram read:

"This is to inform you that your son, Sp-4 Chrostopher E. Anderson was a passenger on an aircraft that was forced to land at a Soviet Base while on a flight from McChord AFB, Washington, to Yokota Airbase, Japan.

"The airplane captain (Capt. Joseph Tosolini, pilot, Bethany, Conn.) reported that after landing that there was no damage to the aircraft or injuries to the passengers or crewmembers.

"The Department of States is in contact with the Soviet Embassy in Washington. You will be promptly advised as additional information is received."

The telegram was received from Kenneth G. Wickham, Major General, USA, The Adjutant General, Washington, Department of Defense.

Anderson, who turned 21 on June 24, is better known in this area as "Pistol Pete" Anderson. He was a member of the GAHS varsity football, basketball and baseball teams for four years while attending Galli[illegible]

SP-4 PETE ANDERSON

but Mrs. Anderson is expecting. She is staying with her parents in Rendville until her husband returns from overseas.

It is believed the DC-8 super [illegible], chartered by the Army strayed off course before being forced down.

Excerpt taken from the *Times Sentinel*

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About Virgil Tackett

Virgil Tackett is my stepfather. I asked him what he remembered about 1952. He told me that he had to work hard, but he had fun, too.

He remembered that life was not as easy as it is now. He did not have the modern conveniences that he has now. He had no indoor plumbing. His mother got water from the well in the yard. To have hot water, she had to heat it on the coal stove. His mom washed their laundry by getting water from a nearby creek and using a washboard to get the laundry clean. Then she hung the clothes on a clothesline to dry.

Because of the lack of plumbing, they had no bathroom. They had a little building away from the house called an outhouse. In the wintertime, he had to wade through snow. When it was raining, he had to wade through mud. In the summertime, it was more convenient to get to, but it did not smell very fragrant.

In 1952 he did have a television set, which was what it was called back then. It was black and white, twenty inches square, and had legs. He watched shows such as the *Lone Ranger, Honeymooners, I Love Lucy, Roy Rogers,* and *Superman.*

He said his parents raised hogs and chickens and also made moonshine. They would butcher the hogs and chickens for their own food.

He remembers that retail prices were a lot different than they are now. He told me that pop was about $ .05, bread was about $ .30, and a five-pound sack of flour was about $ .25. He could buy candy for a penny and ice cream for $ .15.

My stepfather told me a lot about his life in the 50's and about hard times without a job. It helped me understand him better. When I think life is hard today, I remember what he said life was like in the 50's and then life seems easier today.

-Darlene Meek

Buckeye Hills ABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Beehive Kilns of Nelsonville

The Beehive Kilns still stand, proud of their role in Nelsonville history. There used to be more of them, but today only three remain with their smokestacks from the Nelsonville Brick Co. Once a flourishing business, now just a memory in the mind of old men.

They are less than a mile from the Public Square in town, but probably less than half of the local people know they exist, and even fewer know their history. There is a little plaque on a boulder near by, erected in 1980 when the kilns were one hundred years old.

If you turn off Ste. Rte. 33 onto Rte. 278 (Lake Hope Drive), you will find the kilns in just under a half mile. You can walk inside them, feel the bricks, and see where the fires were built. In the parking area, you can see bricks with the star pattern or engraved with "Nelsonville."

In 1875, one of the many hills was approached by men carrying pick axes and shovels and leading mules. They surveyed the hills and then started digging a long, wide crevice. They were looking for hidden treasure and found it, for the hill was full of clay. Not just any clay, but a residual clay known as Number Five Fire Clay. It was a bedded clay found in lower coal measures, also known as Lower Kittanning over clay. They found a vein approximately eight feet thick immediately above a coal seam. This was a seam of very hard and fine clay up to ten feet wide. It was so hard that chips from a pick axe could cut the hands of a miner.

Soon the hill was swarming with men, horses, mules and wheelbarrows. As the miners started working, other men were laying tracks and mounting barrows on them.

Extraction of Number Five Fire Clay was an underground mining process, done (in the 1880's) by human and animal labor. Both coal and clay were removed through the same pit mouth of the mine when both were present. The coal was removed first, then the clay. Once the coal was removed, the coal miners moved on to another mine and the clay miners took over.

The bulk clay was transferred to the brick making plant by railway. J.L. Evans said, "During the Nelsonville coal and clay heydays, there were 365 miles of railroad lines within a ten mile radius of town."

In preparing the clay for processing, workmen measured it by counting the numbers of shovels full they put in the barrow. Next it was wheeled directly to the mixing room. The clay was dumped into a box of dry-pan-grinder with a specified quantity of surface flint clay to give it the necessary plasticity for molding.

A dry-pan-grinder is a large steam-driven mill consisting of a continuously revolving pan, approximately seven feet wide and one foot deep. In the pan were two large cast-iron wheels fixed on a horizontal axis. The weight of the wheels broke the clay chunks into smaller lumps, then into particles small enough to sift through the metal screen in the bottom of the pan. This process took up to fifteen minutes per "charge," or filling of clay.

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Under the pan, the fine clay went into a bin on a mechanical conveyor belt, taking it to the mixing machine, known as the "pug mill." Orton describes a typical steam-driven pug-mill in 1884 as a "trough about eighteen inches wide by eight feet long, and eighteen inches deep. In it works a horizontal axis on which are fixed culling arcs that are arranged spirally, but at such a pitch that their action is slow in moving the clay forward. This process is only one of mixing, no grinding enters into it."

Water was added to the clay by a skilled worker who went by feel to get the right mixture. A process called "soft mud" (or "wet mud") was used to mold the Nelsonville Star brick. Evans says 750 could be molded by hand in a day using a wooden mold. As the plastic clay emerged on the molding table, the worker grabbed a quantity and kneaded it into a lump the size and shape of the wooden mold. This lump of clay was called a "wauk." To prevent the clay from sticking, the mold was dampened and sprinkled with sand before each filling.

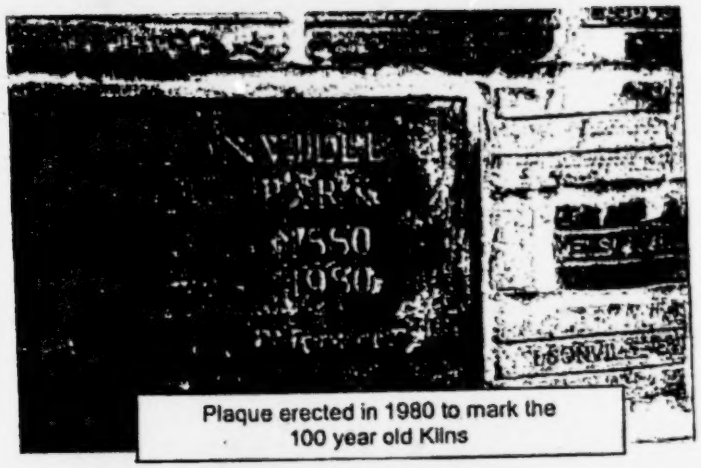
The molds were then carried to a building with a drying floor which was covered with wooden or metal pallets. This floor was heated with live steam from wood burning boilers and circulated through cast-iron pipes. After twenty-four hours, the bricks were transported to the bee hive kiln and set inside by hand. Fire boxes circled the kiln and were constantly tended. The bricks were glazed by the fireman first adding a shovel of coal, then a shovel of salt, then another shovel of coal to each fire box. The heat turned the salt into a mist that fell on the bricks. This coating made the bricks water resistant and they would last for many years when used for paving streets or sidewalks. The salt glaze gave the pave bricks a very distinctive and attractive surface.

A total of seven to nine days in the constantly heated kiln was necessary to fire the bricks, followed by two to four days to cool down. From these kilns came pavers with stars, circles and flowers, as well as those with the name "Nelsonville" stamped on them.

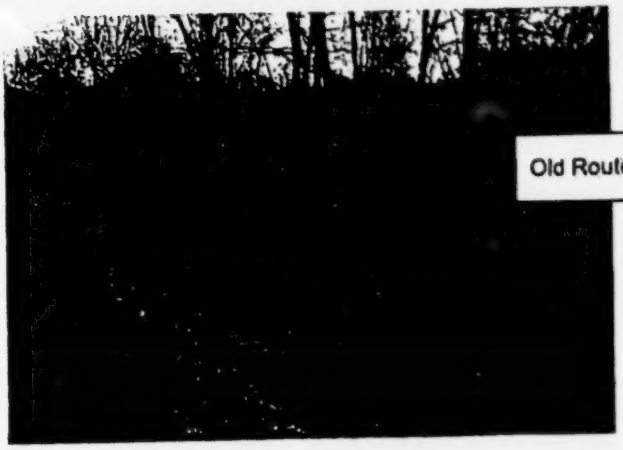
As automobile usage increased in the late twenties and early thirties, smoother and better road surfaces became necessary. Man turned to cement and asphalt for cheaper and better surfacing. However, there are still several streets in Nelsonville where bricks pave the roadway nearly a hundred years later. A stretch of old, old Route 33, known as Dorr Run Road, on the western edge of town is one such road. You can also find streets paved with these brick in the section of Columbus called German Village.

SOURCES;
Writings by Edward Orton Jr. and J.L. Evans in Nelsonville Library
Conversations with Jim Barron of Haydenville, Ohio

-Barbara Monk
North Education Center-ABLE



Plaque erected in 1980 to mark the 100 year old Kilns



Old Route 33 Known as Dorr Run Road

Beehive Kilns

35

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The Migration to the City

A collaboration between 2 students—Jack Ferrell's story as told to Barbara Monk.

I was only 10 when my Daddy and I boarded a Greyhound bus in West Virginia and headed for Columbus, Ohio. The coal mine had given out its last bit of coal; Daddy was out of work so we moved on. Mama and the other 7 children stayed behind until we found a house.

I'd never seen traffic like Columbus had—so many cars—so many people. Since I had never seen a traffic light, I had no idea why it had red, green and yellow lights or what they meant.

When school time came, I entered Douglas Elementary (at Broad and 17th). Naturally, I walked to school and any place I went. I followed other children from near my home in the Washington and 9th area with no fear of ever getting lost.

We always exited the school by the front door. One day I got turned around and left by the back door. There were no children around so I started walking. I hadn't learned the street names so I didn't bother to check where I was going. I was lost but I didn't know it.

I came to a big building that I had never seen before. The street sign said I was on S. Champion Ave. I looked up to the top of the building and saw twin steeples rising into the sky and a great feeling of calmness and peace settled over me. It was like God said, "I'm right here with you, Jack."

I turned the corner and saw a long row house with people sitting on the steps. One family was black, just like me, so I walked over to them. When I told them where I was headed, the lady said, "Child, you're a long way from home."

They put me in their car and drove me to the area of Washington and 9th until I spotted my house.

-Jack Ferrell's story as told to Barbara Monk
North Education Center-ABLE Programs

Historical Weather

Family History of the 1978 Blizzard

January 26, 1978, I went to work at 1:00 a.m., the temperature was 49 degrees and raining. I worked as billing clerk at a meat packing plant in Richfield, Ohio. My job was to add the bills for each truck driver. The drivers delivered to the Akron area, Cleveland, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

As the drivers came into the plant to pick up their runs, they would tell me about the weather report. I didn't pay that much attention because sometimes the reports are wrong. This time the weather report was on target. Some of the drivers left on their deliveries, other drivers had their deliveries cancelled due to the storm. All the trucks were loaded. The trucks had refrigerated Therma-King units so the loaded trucks would be safe for a few days.

By 8:00 a.m. the storm reached our area, the rain changing to snow and ice, the temperature dropped to 18 degrees so fast it was unbelievable. The winds were so strong the rain turned to snow and ice immediately, leaving the roads, sidewalks, and cars covered with thick ice.

The Highway Patrol urged everyone to stay off the roads unless it was absolutely necessary. I did not want to go out onto the slippery roads, but I had very little choice. I had to get home to let my poodle out and feed her.

I left Richfield at 10:00 a.m. I had to take a different route home. I took route 21 south to West Market Street going east to 80 south, there I headed north driving about 15 miles an hour. I wasn't paying much attention to the time. I just wanted to get home safely.

I was very tense because there were times I could not see the road because of whiteouts. The roads were very treacherous. I saw one accident; the car could not come to a stop at a side street. It went onto West Market Street going east, hit the curb and shrubs, then back on West Market Street without any damage to his car or injuries to himself. I was going slowly enough that I didn't hit him. It seemed like I was real close to him.

It was about 1:00 p.m. when I reached my home, about three hours over those treacherous roads. I thanked God for my trip home without an incident.

The blizzard lasted through the night. The temperature remained near zero and the wind chills near 100 degrees below zero. Fifty-one people died.

Ice remained on the roads for about a week to ten days because we were in a deep freeze so the salt would not melt the ice. The ice on the roads was two to three inches thick. Once the temperature began to rise, the salt melted the ice slowly. The blizzard was behind us but not forgotten. What an experience!

Ethel M. Lambert
Compact ABLE

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Life In a Small Town USA

This story begins in the small village of Georgesville, Ohio, in February, 1959.

It was the coldest winter that I could remember. I had come to the village four years earlier as a bride. My husband told me at the time that the village had been founded in the early 1700s up on the side of the hill where the park is now. The village was surrounded by the two Darby's — Big Darby River and Little Darby River. Originally there were two old covered bridges that made it possible to cross these two rivers. However, they were washed away during the flood of 1913 and were replaced by two new iron bridges.

It was a quiet little community then, and it still is now. It is the kind of community where people looked out for each other and came together during hard times - but I am getting away from my story.

During the cold winter of 1959, the ground was covered with snow and it was frozen hard. The two rivers — the Big Darby and the Little Darby — had both frozen over. In fact, they had frozen so hard and thick that they had become favorite skating spots for the children in the village. It was great fun to watch them on the frozen rivers skating back and forth, yelling to one another and having a great time.

One day it started raining. It was one of those rains that you don't think will ever stop. In fact, it continued raining all that day and through the night. Because the ground and the rivers were frozen so hard the rain water had nowhere to go. It began to pool on the ground and on top of the ice. This pooling on the ice caused the ice to begin to break apart. I will never forget the sound of the ice breaking up. It sounded like loud claps of thunder. I could hear it all the way up where I lived. My husband and I walked down to the river in the pouring rain to see what was happening. We were amazed to see the huge chunks of ice that were beginning to break apart in the river. They were at least eighteen inches thick.

The river itself was beginning to overflow its banks. No longer were we looking at the peaceful rivers that surrounded our little community. The rivers were beginning to swell and overrun their banks. It looked as if everything was going to be washed away. The waters were so deep and had spread so far over their banks that you could not tell where one river began and the other one ended. Some of our neighbors had to be evacuated from their homes. I remember they had to use a boat to rescue one elderly woman who lived by herself. One home was completely destroyed by the flooding waters. Others had a lot of water damage in them due to the water covering their ground floors. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

As a community we watched with horror as the waters took over our village. The school had to be closed until the water completely receded back into the confines of its banks.

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The water rose to the bottom of the new iron bridges that had been built because of the flood of 1913. When the bridges were built, it was thought that they would withstand anything. But that was before the flood of 1959.

The state tore down the old iron bridges just as they had the old covered bridges. The roads themselves had to be rerouted so that two new bridges could be built. Bridges that are even bigger and stronger than the old covered bridges and the old iron bridges.

The bridges have been moved and many of the people are no longer there; but the two Darbys — both Big and Little — are still there meandering their way through Darbydale and Franklin County.

-Ida Osborn

Southwest Community Center

Bridges focus of scientific 'shake-up'

Columbus Dispatch article

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Sarah's Story

I did not lose anything from the flood. At the time on June 28, my husband and I, along with the kids, had gone to my aunt and uncle's house for the evening to play cards. We had a cook-out. The wind started to pick up and the sky got very dark. Then the rain started to come down very hard and hail was hitting the windows. As we watched out the window, the trees started leaning way over. We all were joking that there was a tornado in the area. When the electric went out, we kept on playing cards by candlelight. It was fun.

We decided to go home at 1:30 AM My two boys stayed with my aunt but my daughter came home with us. When we left we had to move pieces of wood out of the driveway so we could leave. We turned to go to Mt. Ephraim on our way home, but we could not get through because there was a big tree in the road. So we had to turn around and go back the same way we started. We went down 564 to try to get to Senecaville, but we could not get through that way either because the water was all over the road. So we turned around again and decided to go across the dam. We made it through that way. We drove to Buffalo, Ohio, and got on the interstate to continue home. We got to the Belle Valley exit when a bolt of lightning hit and lit up the whole area. There was water everywhere! All you could see was roofs off all the buildings, cars floating in the water and people on top of some of the buildings. We knew we could not get home that way, so we went on to the Caldwell exit. We could not get off there either. We continued south and crossed over at a turnaround, got on SR 821 and made it home - 2 hours after we left our family's. At 3:00 AM SR 821 was not flooded yet, but by 3:30 A.M. they were knocking on our neighbor's door to get them out.

The next morning when we got up, all you could see was water everywhere. That was the first time I had ever seen water that high in Caldwell. We could not get out for a long time that day. We all walked around the neighborhood to see if everybody was all right. The water was all over. We walked down on 821. I saw something bobbing up and down in the water. I walked through the high water to whatever was bobbing up and down. Then I saw it was two baby raccoons. They swam right up to me, so I picked them up and helped them up into a tree standing nearby. I stood there for awhile to see if they could stay in the tree. They made it up in the tree on a limb where they stayed for a long time. I went back to the tree later after the water went down, but the raccoons were gone. About 5:00 P.M. we started for my aunt's house to pick up my two boys, Shawn and Paul. On the way over we saw how much damage had been done. People had lost their homes, cars, animals, and a few people lost their lives. It was so amazing to see what Mother Nature had done to our community and our neighbors.

The only thing I could say is thank God my family was safe. I'm glad it's all over with. I would not like to go through that again. But if we have to it will only make this community stronger and stronger.

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Patty's Story

The night of June 27, 1998, was the most terrifying night I have ever had to live through. I stayed fairly calm early in the evening. It was raining extremely heavy, and the lightning seemed continuous. My first shock came around midnight when my neighbor knocked on my door. I opened it only to discover about three feet of water surrounding my house.

Within a matter of minutes I was walking through water in my house, so I went upstairs for safety. Probably fifteen minutes later, I heard a crash in my kitchen and came down to discover my refrigerator flipped over in front of my front door. After the refrigerator was pushed away from the door, I finally got the door opened where my neighbor and a fireman were waiting with a boat. I cannot swim, which made this rescue even more fearful. They did, however, get me to dry land where I told my neighbor, "God bless you."

I sat awake the rest of the night in a parking lot, watching the water continue to rise but never reaching me. Those two days of June were like a dream to me, one I pray never happens again.

There is so much that has been lost including living room furniture, family pictures, antiques, my car, etc.; but most important to me, I lost my feelings of home being my "safe place".

My life has changed so much since this ordeal. When you lean on other people for help, then all of a sudden they're leaning on you, it's different. You learn to help yourself and others around you. It was a tough change for me, but after two years it strengthened me to make decisions and do things I could never have accomplished before the flood.

Things are pretty well back to normal, only some aspects are even better. I am a much stronger person knowing I can handle most of life's battles, including the flood of '98. After two years, I still think of those two miserable days every day of my life. I now watch warnings and watches closer than ever, taking them more seriously now. This storm left my home surrounded by about ten feet of water, nothing I ever want to see again.

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Millie's Story

The dates of June 27 and 28, 1998, were terrible for us. There was a tornado that passed over our house. It killed a lady who lived just a few miles from us. My stepdaughter called and told us about it.

At our place we had lots of water. It came down the hollow. That was the first time that had ever happened since we lived there. We had to drive through it to get to the main highway.

We didn't have as much damage as some people did. We lost all of our fruit trees. They were uprooted from the ground during the tornado. But we didn't lose our home or any of our belongings. And nobody in our family was hurt.

Next time I'll be more prepared when the weather looks threatening. But I sure hope it never happens again!

Judy's Story

June 27, 1998, was a busy day for me. My partner and I were catering an alumni reunion in Woodsfield, a town about 30 miles east of us. We spent the day getting everything ready to go. There had been some heavy rains, so I was worried about flooding on SR 78 near the county line. I took along our cell phone when we set off, just in case we had to have assistance.

The catering went well and the sky looked dark and stormy as we left the reunion. My husband called us and said a tornado had passed through Caldwell and was heading east toward us. He advised us to find someplace to stay until the storm passed.

My partner and I headed for McDonald's and enjoyed a lightning display of great intensity. However, I was getting antsy to get back home. After 20 minutes the worst appeared to be over, so we set out for Caldwell. There was still thunder and lightning, making it a tense trip. When we had successfully made it past the point where I had worried about flooding, I was relieved. Finally I could relax.

Five miles down the road my thoughts of getting home quickly were dampened by the sight of several cars stopped along the highway. The road was flooded in a location that it normally doesn't occur. I thought it was too risky to try to drive through the water because it was rising so quickly. We realized one of the other people there was a friend who knew some back roads. We decided to follow his lead and seek a different route home.

As we tried the alternative, rain, wind, thunder and lightning continued to surround us. I felt like I was in a commercial for an SUV. We dodged trees that had fallen into the road, were polluted by small limbs and leaves, and observed what definitely looked like the path of a tornado. Every road we tried had something to block our path.

Finally, we gave up and went to our friend's parents' home. Unfortunately, it was a mobile home sitting on top of a high hill. There was no electricity, but the phone worked. We were able to reach my husband and tell him we would not make it back to Caldwell that night.

For what seemed like an endless night, we were bombarded with one storm after another. A total of 11 inches of rain fell in just a few hours. Water was in places that no one, not even the old-timers, had ever seen. All roads into Caldwell were blocked by Mother Nature.

Early the next day, I called my husband and told him we were going to again set out for home. As we made our way off the hill we could see much evidence of high water. There was debris everywhere. Power lines were lying beside the roads. Water marks could be seen on the side of several buildings. Streams of cars were looking for ways to get into and out of town.

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About 15 hours after we had left, we were once again home. It was wonderful! Even though we lost 2 trees and had no portable water for 2 days, we felt lucky.

One benefit of this disaster was the sense of community it created. People went out of their way to help others. Churches combined efforts and fed and housed those who had lost their homes for several weeks. Many volunteers assisted in any way they could to aid with the cleanup and rebuilding. Friendships were formed between stranded motorists and the local folks who gave them shelter until the interstate was opened once again.

There are still some who have not fully recovered from the Flood of '98. Many decided it was a great time to make a new start someplace else. Others lost loved ones and will never be able to undo that loss. I, for one, am glad it is now just a memory. That was enough adventure to last me for a long time.

Mike's Story

June 27-28 were rather interesting for me. Still married, my wife and I were staying in Sarahsville at my sister's. My wife was expecting our second child, getting those outrageous cravings. I decided to get something for her from the store, so I left for Caldwell.

After being in Caldwell no longer than five minutes, I started back towards Belle Valley on the interstate. Needless to say, while driving down the off ramp at Belle Valley, I had nowhere to go.

It is against the law to go backwards up an off ramp, but who is going to argue with me unable to go anywhere else? Returning to Caldwell, I stayed at a friend's house for the night, unable to be with my wife during this terrifying ordeal until late the next evening.

Fortunately, I did not lose anything out of these two miserable days. However, it has changed my life. I watch the weather and storms more closely now. For me, everything is about the same. I'm coping pretty well, meanwhile, I'm also staying alert.

Gary & Pat's Story

It was a terrible, shocking night. We live in a house that has been in my family for years. My mother grew up in this house. Water had never been an issue. The field behind our house flooded once in a while, but our house sits up on a bank and a flood just never entered our minds. The telephone woke us up at 3:00 am. Rick Starr, an employee of the water plant where Gary is superintendent, was calling to let him know of the situation at the plant, which was grim. When Gary got off the phone, he said, "I'm going to take a look outside." He was gone only a few minutes. He came back inside and told me to hurry and get dressed because we had to leave. He had tried to walk out to the back yard to get his backhoe and tractor, but he was already in water up to his waist. The water had broken all our basement windows and was gushing in. I still couldn't believe that the water would get that high and come into our house. But when we stepped off our front porch step, reality set in.

We managed to get our pick-up and car out of the garage and drove them over to the next street. Then we came back and stood across the street from our house and watched with flashlights. The electric had been off for hours and it was still raining. All the neighbors were up and concerned about their belongings. We watched the water rise and come upon our porch and into our house and there was nothing we could do. We ended up with a full basement and one foot of water in the house. After the water went down, we had nothing but mud left behind. The carpet was like a sponge when you stepped on it and everything smelled awful. All of our shoes, photo albums, books, anything that was on a shelf close to the floor was gone, nowhere to be found. The water had been a foot up on our furniture and it was all slimy. The refrigerator had mud left on the inside. The kitchen cupboards on the bottom shelf had mud on them. The oven was ruined. In our basement everything was ruined, furnace, hot water heater, all of our Christmas decorations had floated out the windows, even our Christmas tree.

But Gary still had more problems. The water plant had to be dealt with. People were without water too, besides electric. He put everything aside here at home and the water plant became the number one priority. Gary and the rest of the men who work there worked tirelessly for four days until the plant was back in operation. The community is to be commended for coming together and helping each other in this hard time.

Gary and I may have lost material things, but so what. We still have each other and some families were not so lucky. While this whole mess was going on, I also lost my mother who was a patient at Summit Acres Nursing Home. We were coping with quite a lot, but thank God, our son and his wife came here to our home and helped clean up everything.

Gary and I thank and praise the Lord everyday for our blessings. I think this whole situation and problems that come along with and after the flood have had made us stronger and more aware of how lucky we are. If you give your problems to the Lord, he will help you get through them.

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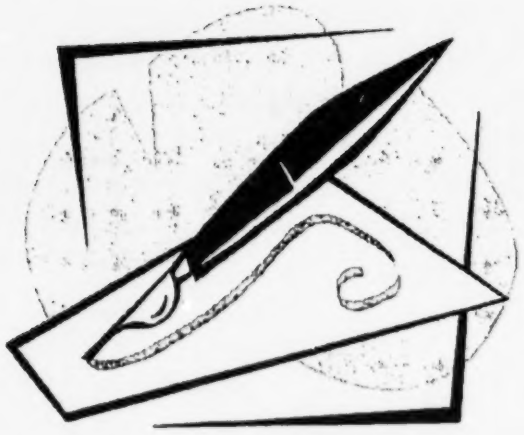

Historical Fiction

Legend of North Bay

In January the winter winds blow cold across Kelley's Island. Visitors are scarce except for a breed of individuals known as "Ice Fishermen." In the early 60's, I was one of those risk takers. I can't remember the exact date, but the ice and the fishing were exceptionally good. The winter blast of cold weather had come earlier than usual that year. The ice had been building for weeks. The out-of-town newspapers were keeping up with the island fishing reports, and interest was high. Each weekend, the island air services were strained with fishermen. It was a lure most could not resist.

On a weekday, my flight left Carl Keller Field at first light. Off in the distance was a brilliant sunrise. Upon landing, I gathered my gear and headed for the North Bay. The best fish I had ever tasted were caught in North Bay. By the time the sun had reached its peak, I was a mile offshore fishing in thirty feet of water. I was pulling in fish and off in the distance I could see others doing the same. As the afternoon wore on, the weather started to deteriorate quickly. What started out as light snow had turned heavy. It soon became a "white out" condition with the wind gusting in all directions. With the wind and snow howling around me, I was hoping that this was just a passing squall, and I made up my mind to wait it out.

By the time I had gathered my gear and set out for shore, the storm had intensified. The temperature felt sub zero. I tried to pick up my pace. Glancing at my watch, I found that I had been walking for almost an hour and still had not reached land. Pressure cracks were starting to open up with water being forced up on the ice. Darkness was settling in rapidly and my mind was playing games with me. I realized I was lost.

Then it happened! I stepped into an open pressure crack and was in icy water up to my chest. Kicking desperately, I struggled to pull myself up on the ice. I lay there, both mentally and physically drained. It was also almost completely dark now, and the winds were blowing at gale force. While trying to gather my strength, I felt something touch my leg. I opened my eyes to find a large black Lab next to me. I didn't quite understand, but I knew the Lab was there to help me. Grasping the Lab's collar, I was able to pull myself up. Walking was difficult. My clothes were frozen, and pain from the cold was shooting up my arms and legs. As I held tightly to the Lab's collar for support, I couldn't help wondering if he might be leading me further out onto the lake. But it seemed he instinctively knew the difference between good and bad ice. His main purpose was to watch over me.

I had no idea how long we traveled together. Finally I felt land under my feet. As I whispered, "We're OK now," I started up the embankment toward the road. In the distance I saw headlights approaching. It was the Village Police Chief searching for lost fishermen. As I got in the car, I turned to look for the Lab. He vanished as fast as he had appeared. I imagined that he headed for home and a warm bed. I told the Chief that tomorrow I must locate the Lab and thank his owners.

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After a quick ride up Division Street, we arrived at the Lodge. The Chief helped me inside. Joe, the owner, offered me some hot soup and a badly needed brandy. I was able to tell the others of my frigid ordeal after heat from the old stove had penetrated my frozen body. When I finished my story, Joe said he knew for a fact that no one on the island had a black Lab. I said it couldn't be true; one saved my life today.

Joe was very thoughtful for a moment before stepping into his back room and returning with a tattered scrapbook. I could see in his eyes the tenderness he felt for this old scrapbook. Joe said he had a story to share with me. Turning the old pages, he pulled out a newspaper clipping from 1924. It told of an island resident who perished along with his black Lab when their auto plunged through the ice on North Bay. As the story stated, both were able to get out of the auto before it went down, but the man could not climb out of the icy water. Each time he pushed the dog onto the ice, the Lab would jump back into the water to try to save his master. After a few minutes, neither could struggle any longer. Both of their lives' voyages had come to an end. Neither had ever been found.

As Joe talked, I let my mind drift back to the Lab, truly convinced that the experience was real. The depth of serenity I had felt could not have come from a myth. Was it possible, while I lay there on the ice, I had indeed passed through that doorway of lost souls? Could that black Lab still prowl the North Bay, always willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for any unfortunate soul lost on his journey?

To you, My Loyal Companion, I vow to keep your spirit alive.

-Phillip Edwards

Sandusky County ABLE

The Moonlight Runner and Lost Ballast Island

The year was 1928 and out on the lake was a time of high drama. The 18th Amendment had transformed ordinary people into "Rum Runners." Nearly 9,000,000 cases of liquor were shipped to lakefront towns from over a hundred Canadian breweries and distilleries in the first seven months of Prohibition. Boatloads of smugglers were gliding across the lake. Bootlegging had become a glittering world of fast riches for those who dared to defy the law. There was never a shortage of buyers on the American side, and this new industry created many new jobs on both borders. Most local police were sympathetic toward the "Rum Runners," but the federal government saw things much differently. They were determined to drive them from the lakes, and they did not hesitate to use armed force.

It was during this time that there was a beautiful young lady named Magi. She was employed as a maid at a hotel on South Bass Island. She had fallen in love with a former bootlegger. He was known only as "Max" to the Island people. Friends of Magi had warned her of the risks involved, as well as the reputation of a gangster heart, but she loved Max and he loved her. They had met about 3 months earlier when Max was making deliveries to several "speakeasies" on the island.

Max had been making runs for quite a while to islands, as well as to the mainland and had become well known. His 30-foot Belle Isle Bearcat, "Midnight Fox," was becoming a legend on the lake. He knew it was a matter of time before the Coast Guard would catch up with him. Max and Magi had plans for him to make just one more run before the busy July 4th weekend. Magi would then return with Max to Canada, to marry and continue their lives in a much slower style with the wealth he had made on the lake. By this time though, the Revenuers and the Coast Guard were on full alert knowing there would be a lot of activity before the holiday. Max suspected this and had a plan. He would slip into the harbor between Peach Point and Gibraltar. In a smaller rowboat guided by a lantern, Magi would lead the way through the submerged rocks.

The stage was set. It was July 2nd and there was a half moon low on the horizon. It took Max only minutes to cross the lake and deliver his illicit cargo to Oak Point. With Magi's help all went as planned. In a while they had the cases of Scotch whiskey unloaded. They both knew that in a matter of minutes, they would be off on their new life together.

As they slid past Lost Ballast, little did they know what fate awaited them. In an instant, a white blast of light splintered into the boat. Max instantly pushed down hard on the throttle. At that exact moment, the 40-foot Coast Guard boat that had lain in ambush position opened up with a hail of deadly machine gun fire. By the time the Liberty engine on the Coast Guard boat got up to speed, they could not locate the "Midnight Fox." Not until dawn did they find the many bits and pieces floating near the ambush site. This led them to believe there were no survivors, and all had slipped to the bottom. Max, Magi,

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and the "Midnight Fox" were never seen again.

For over a decade, through the passing of time, Islanders often thought of them and their destiny. Then in 1942, when WWII news filled everyone's thoughts, this personal notice appeared in the Wheatley Ontario Daily News....

> *"To my beloved Captain Max Fox of the Canadian Royal Navy, whose life was taken by a German torpedo in the North Atlantic, please rest now my warrior. May all your 'Midnights' be filled with my love." Magi*

-Phillip Edwards
Sandusky County ABLE

The Night a P.T. Boat Prowled Lake Erie

There are many stories that are adrift and unsolved on Lake Erie. A few of them are tall tales, and I'm afraid I would be laughed off the lake even to mention them. Those can be ignored, but some can't.

Not long ago, I slipped down to the library on a mission to the past. As I sifted through the archives of old newspaper clippings from the Cleveland Plain Dealer dated October 3, 1945 the headline-grabbing story was "War boat sunk off Whiskey Island". As I read the first accounts, it pushed my pulse rate into the red zone and cast a spell on my adrenaline. Most lake stories are worn with time, but what unfolded was one of the lake's more unusual untold episodes. This story has been hibernating somewhere between V.J. Day and Monica. Trying to recall the details through the doorway of my memory is somewhat like looking in the wrong end of a pair of binoculars. With the help of the local library, I will now embark on a voyage back to the fall of 1945.

The sunken man-of-war was an icon of WWII in the Pacific. An eighty-foot "Patrol Torpedo Boat," a.k.a. P.T. Boat, lay on the bottom of the lake about one-quarter mile north of Whiskey Island. Although not visible by land, its dark shadow had been spotted by a pilot departing on a morning flight from Burke Lakefront Airport. The only information available at press time was that the Cleveland Coast Guard was investigating.

October 4, 1945, Plain Dealer Morning Edition.... "When the U.S. Navy was contacted, they gave no explanation as to the odd occurrence." Or, was it an effort to conceal information? It wasn't long before they had placed the area under tight security.

October 5, 1945, Plain Dealer Morning Edition.... "Salvage operations are now under way by the U.S. Navy." The Plain Dealer ran daily articles describing the progress and trying to unravel the incident. The news swept across the city as fast as a spring storm crossing the lake.

October 6, 1945, Plain Dealer Morning Edition.... "Each day bewildered curiosity seekers gathered at the shoreline." It was as if someone had found the master key to unlock each spectator's imagination. A flood of "ifs" came up with the sun each morning, as excitement ran high on pure speculation. The best theories were hotter than "Betty Grable." The Plain Dealer followed up on every clue that seemed logical, and even the illogical ones that seemed interesting, but their efforts to learn the truth were inconclusive.

October 7, 1945, Plain Dealer Morning Edition.... "The Navy salvage crew brought a magnificent war machine to the surface." Now wider implications took shape. It was no accident that the P.T. was on the bottom. It had been scuttled. This solved the questions of the crew's whereabouts.

Although unverified, the belief was that the boat had been used to run some illegal

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cargo. Perhaps an attempt had been made to dispose of the evidence by sending the P.T. Boat to the deep solace of the lake bottom, but the P.T. took a dive sooner than anticipated before reaching deep water.

October 8, 1945, Plain Dealer Morning Edition... "The P.T. Boat was far from being a decrepit old war relic." Powered by three 1350 h.p. Packard gas engines, it was over the edge in the speeds it could obtain at maximum power. Many of the Navy's captains returning from the war stated riding on a P.T. at full force was like holding onto a drunk on ice.

No police or coast guard boats on the lake could even come close to the mystic speeds of the P.T. This warrior was in pristine condition, although all of its lights had been removed, and the entire boat had been painted with flat black paint. This gave further credence to the notion that the boat had become a pawn in a high stakes crime.

October 10, 1945, Plain Dealer Morning Edition... "Lieutenant Commander Bruce Campbell, a spokesperson for the Navy's recorded copy of the P.T.'s mission log shed light on its military career. The Electric Boat Co. of Bayonne, N.J., built Hull Number 621 which had been commissioned June, 1943. Hull 621 had achieved distinction in war patrols with the Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron of the Pacific Fleet." Later, it was returned to the U.S. to be retained for instructional purpose at the Great Lakes Training Center near Chicago. When the Navy checked with the G.L.T.C., they listed the P.T. as "Whereabouts unknown." Could the P.T. have fallen victim to a world of stolen possessions and human ambitions? Found in the boat was an oilskin chart case containing several water soaked charts of the Detroit River. Both the Cleveland Coast Guard and the Cleveland Police could only conclude that whatever the high stakes crime had been, it had been carried out by a select group of non-amateurs, that left no margin for errors.

October 25, 1945, Plain Dealer Morning Edition... "The Cleveland Police believe their investigation has unlocked the puzzle of the PT 621." Prior to the early morning discovery, as the rest of the lake slumbered, a major art theft had taken place in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. It occurred at the Art Institute of Windsor located on Victoria Street less than a block from the Detroit River. The Curator of the Institute said several pieces of Renaissance Art had been taken during the night with the help of some sophisticated equipment. The art objects were listed as priceless. The Curator indicated clever art pirates looted the paintings from a heavily secured vault. The rare paintings had been sent to Canada for safe keeping to avoid possible damage during the air raid blitz on London by the German Luftwafe. Now owned by a socially prominent London family, the art at one time had been owned by the Duke of Kensington.

There was no doubt that the heist had been carried out by master thieves with an ingenious plan for using the fastest means of maritime travel. Even in the 40's the art world had unscrupulous buyers willing to pay staggering sums of money to secure priceless treasures for their private sanctuaries. The last mention of the story appeared in the

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Plain Dealer that December. There were no leads on any of the art thieves or any trace of the art cache.

P.T. 621 was returned to the Great Lakes Training Center. With the war finally over and Christmas just days away, the P.T. saga was quickly forgotten. The story had long ago slipped from the headlines. By far it was not the biggest event of 1945, but the mixture of fact and tale fueled people's imaginations. Long locked in time, the old clippings had claimed a lair deep in the chambers of the Port Clinton Library. Their silence is still elusive, but possibly the incident may be remembered by a few people in Cleveland.

I had gone in search of a story and accidentally stumbled into a passageway that led to a refuge of another unsolved lake mystery that had vanished with time. I now ask myself, are the winds of the past still searching for the truth of the occurrence or have I only disturbed the silence of mere shadows?

-Phillip Edwards
Sandusky County ABLE

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